

DNREC introduces Delaware Living Shorelines Monitoring Framework to help gauge success of shoreline restoration projects

DOVER – The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Watershed Stewardship in partnership with public and private environmental organizations have introduced the Delaware [Living Shorelines Monitoring Framework](#), a tool to help landowners, professionals, and scientists develop plans for gauging the success of living shoreline projects installed throughout the state.

Living shorelines are a natural and effective way to stabilize a shoreline, reduce erosion, and provide beneficial habitat in coastal environments. Living shorelines provide a natural alternative to hard shoreline stabilization methods such as bulkheads and riprap, with the "softer" alternatives offering numerous benefits over hard stabilization options, including providing wildlife habitat and runoff remediation.

The monitoring framework was created by the Delaware Living Shorelines Committee, comprising professionals from DNREC, National Estuary Programs, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, and private engineering and consulting companies. The committee provides practitioners and researchers the opportunity to discuss current living shoreline projects in Delaware, along with upcoming projects, and enables them to stay informed on new policies or techniques.

"Living shorelines are the foundation of a unique, natural

environmental strategy to counter erosion. As the strategy for installing these evolves, the monitoring methodology created by the Delaware Living Shorelines Committee will help ensure the creation of more effective and resilient shorelines in the future,” said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin.

The Living Shoreline Monitoring Framework outlines how to identify and prioritize living shoreline project goals – such as shoreline stabilization, habitat creation, and water quality improvement – and other objectives. The step-by-step framework helps a user assess whether a living shoreline is developing correctly for each goal, and how to manage a site better if the living shoreline’s performance is lagging. For example, if vegetation is not growing as it should, the framework spells steps that can be taken to improve growing conditions.

The [monitoring framework](#) can be found on [the Delaware Living Shorelines website](#), under “Additional Resources – Research.” The document allows for varying levels of expertise, technology, expense, and effort to create a custom monitoring plan based on the goals of each project or site. The resulting monitoring plan will tell a user what information to collect about a project, and how and when to collect it throughout the year.

To learn more about living shorelines, or information on how to join the Delaware Living Shorelines Committee, or to learn if your property is suitable for a living shoreline, please visit <https://www.delawarelivingshorelines.org/> or contact Alison Rogerson, DNREC Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program, at Alison.Rogerson@delaware.gov or Danielle Kreeger at dkreeger@delawareestuary.org.

Contact: Joanna Wilson, DNREC Public Affairs, 302-739-9902